



Indianapolis
Gregory A. Ballard, Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor Ballard Accepts President's "My Brother's Keeper" Community Challenge

INDIANAPOLIS— Mayor Greg Ballard today announced the City of Indianapolis has accepted President Barack Obama's My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge. The President launched My Brother's Keeper to address persistent opportunity gaps faced by boys and young men of color and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.

"The President's leadership and focus on this issue closely matches the work we are doing in Indianapolis with the Your Life Matters initiative," said Mayor Ballard. "Our holistic effort aims to address the underlying issues that lead to crime. Participating in this challenge will help Indy engage with more partners who specialize in solving these issues."

Mayor Ballard has met with President Obama and other senior administration officials many times over the last two years to discuss the issues facing Indianapolis and other communities. Mayor Ballard formed the Your Life Matters Task Force to study the issues that lead to crime in our community and propose steps the city can take to address the problem of violence involving young men of color. The Task Force, co-chaired by Tanya Bell, President of Indiana Black Expo, and Jamal Smith, Executive Director of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission, has been working for months on its report that will be presented to the Mayor in the coming month.

"For the last few months, members of the Your Life Matters Task Force have assessed various initiatives, policy and evidence-based programs to ensure that African-American males in Indianapolis have the opportunity to thrive and live quality lives," said Tanya Bell, President & CEO of Indiana Black Expo and Co-Chair of the Your Life Matters Task Force. "I am happy to hear that Mayor Ballard has accepted President Obama's My Brother's Keeper challenge. I hope this commitment will open the door to funding opportunities for programs as well as advocacy efforts for policy changes that help eliminate barriers that exist for our youth, particularly African-American males," added Bell.

The President's My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge encourages local governments to build and execute a plan to improve the life outcomes of all young people. It encourages communities to convene a summit of local partners to develop a strategy and propose actions to better serve the community's youth. Indy will host a My Brother's Keeper/Your Life Matters summit on Tuesday, November 18. More details will be provided prior to the event.

Mayor Ballard's Your Life Matters initiative targets societal problems facing the Indy community, including: childhood education, suspension/expulsion in our schools, mentoring, job assistance, hunger, and ex-offenders not being adequately prepared to successfully return to society. Accepting this challenge will help Indy possibly qualify for federal grant opportunities to address many of these factors.

[Click here](#) to read the White House Fact Sheet on President Obama's My Brother's Keeper Community Challenge

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